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SIXPENCE

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Notes of the Week

As we write, the issue of the Irish Elections swings ominously to and fro. But not so much towards Mr. Cosgrave that any sane observer can take much heart of grace. Indeed, it would not be a surprise, though it must be a shock, to find the new Dail firmly in the hands of Eamon De Valera. What next? Heaven knows—or Hell. Ruin for Ireland, perhaps bloodshed for Ireland, a new Election before long and always for England the curse which hangs over John Bull's Other Island and the sea which runs between.

To
and
Fro

First of all, the guns of the I.R.A. have not spoken. Not that they have voluntarily remained silent in holster and pocket. Murder has slunk away from the polls in face of the strong man armed. To the threat of Mr.

Two
Richmonds

De Valera's Praetorians answered the threat of Dr. O'Higgins' White Army, the A.C.A., or Army Comrades Association. The I.R.A. is computed to number about 20,000. So is the A.C.A. The I.R.A. is reputed, among this number, to have about 5,000 experienced, dangerous, unscrupulous gunmen, ready to go anywhere and shoot anyone. The A.C.A. has the same. But here steps in a difference between these two formidable bodies. Dr. O'Higgins' other 15,000, all enrolled by him since August of last year, are for the most part ex-service men who have smelled powder in the Great War or in Irish "troubles," whereas their opposite numbers are callow youths full of en-

thusiasm, as keen as anyone to let off a gun from behind a wall, but without any desire whatever for guns to be let off at them.

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Therefore, when Mr. De Valera was told that, if a bead were drawn on Cosgrave men he would be held "personally responsible," the I.R.A. pocketed its pride and its guns. Who shall say that Dr. O'Higgins, whose brother Cavanagh O'Higgins, Free State Minister of Justice, was "bumped off" in 1927 has not deserved well of his country, the while he avenged his kin in the best possible way—by making repetition of that murder impossible? For the first time, thanks to Dr. O'Higgins and the A.C.A. free speech has blossomed into being in the Free State. Before, no man dared whisper to his own son that he thought ill of "Boss" De Valera. Now, open talk has gone the round of every farm and every public house in Ireland—and it has not been favourable to the Master of Fianna Fail.

**

What has weighed most heavily against Mr. De Valera is the charge of moral cowardice. He dissolved the Dail owing to a split in the Cabinet, two leading members of which told him flatly that he was beaten in his fight with England. Whatever the direct result of the election, a widening of this split can hardly be avoided. For Mr. De Valera, going to the country on the issue of Treaty or Treaty be Damned, did not have the pluck to charge for victory. He played for time, and when he could wait no longer, which

A
Permanent
Split

was only last Saturday, it contained nothing on which his extremist followers had counted. Nothing about a Republic, nothing about beating the foul English to their knees. It was Mr. De Valera's knees that turned weak, and the Irish don't like that.

* *

Between Mr. Cosgrave and Mr. De Valera the choice of English sympathy is made. The former's

Cumann and Stay In

victory, if victory it be, is like to be extremely narrow. In the Dail dissolved he counted 71 votes to Mr. De Valera's 77. Behind him in the fight he has had his own party, the Cumann na Gaedheal (pronounce: Come in a Gale. As an opponent declared—"They may have Come in a Gale, but they'll go out in a tempest!"), the Centre party, and all Independents except Jim Larkin. These form the Treaty parties. The De Valera Non-Treaty parties consist of his own Fianna Fail, Labour, and Jim Larkin on his own. A swing of four votes might give peace to Ireland and keep the Free State calmly within the Empire.

* *

Mr. Cosgrave's programme, should he be elected President on February 8 when the new Dail meets,

His Three Days

is to cross at once to England and bring the tariff war to an end by a rapid settlement. He has indeed fixed the date for this, Saturday, February 11. Keen work. But has not Sir Thomas Inskip said that, if the Free State acknowledges its Treaty obligations, that is, throws over the fatal De Valera Republican ambition, England will be generous? Mr. Cosgrave would plead, and believes he can prove, Ireland's incapacity to pay up. If he wins, if he succeeds—if—if—Mr. Cosgrave's purpose is to dissolve the Dail once more, trusting to the renown of his settlement to bring his own party back with a clear majority, independent of other supporters, and so give Ireland stable government for five years.

All things considered, this is perhaps the best for which England too could hope.

* *

It is really difficult to understand the Australian mind on this infernal question of "body-line bowling" and the Test matches.

Fast Bowling and Loose Talking

First they invent their own catchphrase for an ordinary practice of fast bowlers, and then they behave (not for the first or, probably, the last time) like a crowd of sheer hooligans and then their Board of Control, a responsible authority, sends a cable of protest to the M.C.C. which, besides being completely undignified in the actual protest, embarks on high politics with peculiar offensiveness. After

a pause for reflection the M.C.C. sends an answer which, by universal consent, is strictly pertinent, dignified, chilly and a little severe, expressing the mind of all Englishmen in an offer to cancel the remaining Test matches, if they really are producing a dreadful and dangerous crisis in Anglo-Australian relations. No more and certainly no less had to be said.

* *

And then what happens? Australia is "staggered"; the splenetic critics who had been egging

"Enough of This Foolery"

on the Australian Board of Control turn and rend it for the clumsy rudeness of its protest; the childishness of the anti-English campaign is exchanged for the puerility of those who are suddenly astonished by the obvious consequences of their own actions.

The Australian Board of Control may still elect to cancel the rest of the tour. If they do, few Englishmen will regret it. Indeed we are inclined to think this the best solution of a boring and stupid, but irritating squabble; on one condition, that for at least ten years no Test matches are played between an England and an Australian cricket eleven. That would have two great advantages. It would leave us free to play our game of cricket without impertinent interference. And it would prevent persons like Mr. Oldfield—and others—from talking nonsense.

* *

The expectation expressed a fortnight since in these columns that we are in for a "pull baker—pull devil" tussle with the United States over War Debts and Gold

Great Expectations? Standard would seem to be justified by the terms of Mr. Franklin Roosevelt's guarded invitation to Washington in March coupled with conditions and the demand for "concurrent" discussion. The advantage gained by this country's export trade from the fall in the value of sterling as against the dollar sticks badly in the American gizzard. Unsought by us, we can hardly be expected to forego this compensation. That we shall not do so for the relief of America's trade, may be taken as certain. What remains to be seen is whether Washington realises this and is merely proposing to use the gold standard card in a game of poker, or really hopes to force it on us by the war debts lever. In the latter case it will go badly with the war debts.

* *

But England does not want it to go badly with the war debt question. Our object is not repudiation, but the enlightenment of the great American public, so that it may agree to the debt being reduced to a manageable size. The case could not have been better put than briefly by

Al for Us Again

Mr. Goodenough, speaking as Chairman of Barclays Bank last week, and at length by the Chancellor of the Exchequer this week. Enlightenment however in the desired degree can hardly be expected with the rapidity of the road to Damascus. Therefore the best thing to hope for is a war debt moratorium that will give everyone a breathing space. The suggestion is not our own, but that of Mr. Al Smith, previously quoted in these columns. Being Governor Roosevelt's predecessor, he may be presumed to speak not without the book. At least we hope so.

* *

Another fortnight and the imbroglio into which the League of Nations has got itself over the Manchurian conflict may reach a certain degree of fixity. For nearly two years the League has been floundering in the morass created by its own initial blunders. Now it must come to a decision. Some good observers on the spot think that the Committee of Nineteen appointed to deal with the subject will give birth to a relatively anodyne report putting on paper mitigated reprobation of Japan; that country will then, with a shrug of her shoulders (if Japanese could be so impolite), leave the Committee, but not the League or its Council, and that will be all. For this, the best way out of the mess in the circumstances, we should have to thank the revelation accorded at a late hour to Sir Eric Drummond that it would be better for his shop to keep on its books its only serious customer in the Far East.

But it is also possible that those members of the League who do not care that Indian coin, a dam, about the East, far or otherwise, will force the acceptance of far more obnoxious findings. Then would be justified the remark attributed in a moment of pique to M. Herriot: "The League is a Tower of Babel in the Forest of Bondy"—the French equivalent of Hownslow Heath in the highwaymen's heyday.

* *

Mr. George Moore had lived so long, and published so little of late years that when he died a few days ago he was scarcely more than a name to the present generation of readers. He belonged emphatically to the Paters and the Landors, not the Hardys of this world; that is to say, he was of the sect that places style over matter, not of the more numerous company which reverses the relative importance of the two.

Actually he had very little to say, and said it very well indeed; but even with "Esther Waters," his most-read book, one felt that this exquisite literature was not quite life. Probably he preferred it like that; for George Moore was a true child of the so-called Little Renaissance which flowered and

faded in the nervous Nineties. Most of the writers of that day sipped letters like a liqueur, and accepted life (as we do whisky) a little under proof. No doubt it was better for the nerves, but it really did not satisfy the appetite.

* *

Recently several newspapers have been incensed by the parking-out of national masterpieces in the offices of Whitehall. The Galleries, it appears, have not wall-space for all their treasures. If this is so, why, in the name of reason, do they not change their exhibitions, reshuffle a little, and let us see some of the long-hidden masterpieces? Take the Tate, for example. Why have we to view the same things in the same places year after year?

It is probable that even the Gallery of the Imperial War Museum at South Kensington abounds in pictures which have never seen the light, and yet how seldom the collection there is re-arranged. To take one instance, this week we are able to see for the first time some of the drawings made at the Front by Adrian Hill who was selected as an Official War Artist while serving in the H.A.C. Hill made two hundred drawings which have lain concealed in portfolios ever since. This neglect cannot be explained by any demerits of the drawings, which are in fact remarkable when we consider that the artist was only twenty-two at the time he got his commission. For the most part in pen and wash they depict with equal spirit and fidelity the state of the battlefields in Flanders during the last agony of the War.

* *

It has just been announced that a sum of £15,000 is to be allocated by the London and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority for the purpose of reductions and revisions of lighting and power charges in the Thames Valley and mid-Surrey districts. That announcement has a good ringing sound, but it would have a better one were it accompanied by a statement that all the price reductions brought about by the Joint Electricity Authority had been rendered possible by the profits made by this Authority as distinct from its advantages as a bureaucracy that aims at a State-backed monopoly.

An article on another page describes the Joint Electricity Authority. Probably not one person in ten thousand knows of it, yet it concerns the pocket and the daily life of every ratepayer, and it can hardly be denied that its object is, in effect, the nationalising of one of our most vital services. It is difficult to give it a political pedigree, because although it saw the light in 1925 it did so after strangely mixed circumstances. A vague form of

**George Moore,
Literature,
and Life**

**The
Electricity
Experiment**

Nationalisation appears to have been its mother, but it would defy the whole College of Heralds to say definitely whether its father was Conservative, Liberal or Socialist: conditions being what they were everybody was so anxious to flirt with whatever had a superficially attractive appearance that the more responsible side of the parentage will probably for ever remain mysterious.

* *

But there it is—a "Public Authority" representing one of the most ambitious of the post-war attempts to obtain the control and the administration of great businesses, and relying, in so far as the

A Few Sparks

overwhelming majority of its membership is made up, on men who may or may not (in all probability not) have any knowledge of the undertakings which they seek to control. Why should that be expected if they are delegates of local authorities subject to election every three years?

This great experiment has been going on for seven years. In that time it has covered 160 square miles (with a population of over 300,000) of a total area which was presented to it of 1,797 square miles (with a population of 8,000,000). Let the mathematicians calculate how long, at this rate of progress, it will take to cover the whole 1,797 square miles. We are not so much concerned with that. What we do think is that commercial enterprise and competition are still able to put up a better record. And we agree that ratepayers and electricity consumers should watch with an eagle eye what is happening or what is proposed to happen in their own districts.

* *

One thing we would suggest: if the Joint Electricity Authority prides itself on being able to produce a more efficient service at lower cost, then let it give a guarantee to that effect *before* a local undertaking is acquired, and let that guarantee be based on working profits.

Why Not?

Meanwhile the sum remains—if it has taken seven years for 160 square miles to go into 1,797 square miles, and if it has taken seven years for 300,000 persons out of 8,000,000 to be roped in, how long—? We are inclined to think the longer the better.

* *

Mr. Harcourt Williams' production of "The Winter's Tale," the latest achievement of the Old Vic, is quite the finest work as yet seen in the present season's remarkable series of classical revivals there. But it is more than that: it is a Shakespearean performance of very

No Unconsidered Trifle

high rank indeed, and one of which, with a few reservations, any theatre in the world might be proud. "The Winter's Tale" is too rarely seen. To be brought off with success, two things are required for the play—a convincing Leontes and that peculiar judgment in the producer which can hover between tragedy and comedy, and give just the right touch of seriousness without impeding the sense of artifice that lies at the root of all comedy. In Mr. Malcolm Keen the Old Vic possesses an almost perfect Leontes. This is his most complete impersonation so far, for which his uncommon gift of suggesting a tortured mind renders him especially fitted. As producer, Mr. Harcourt Williams here reaches a high mark: his simplicity and directness of touch are invaluable in the early and final scenes, while his cheerful fantasy finds free play in those of the Shepherd and Autolycus. Individually, most of the parts are well played, and Miss Veronica Turbeigh is a moving Hermione, particularly in the trial scene, where Mr. Keen too withholds nothing of his power. His Leontes stamps him as one of our finest Shakespearean actors.

* *

The week-end that is behind us gave us all a genuine taste of winter in its least disagreeable form—white frost, hard ground, some snowy cloud and a lot of sunshine to show the beauty of bare woods. It also set the prophets, omen-mongers, and statisticians busy in telling us that we were or were not to have a long time of hard frost, with all the most suitable comments on the historic frosts by which this country has been bound. It is difficult to know why these events exercise so strange a fascination—though every kind of fascination makes its own insoluble problem. At all events, whether it be drought, rain, heat, cold, frost or fog, the historic instance is always less historic than it sounds, for the historical perspective is swallowed in personal experience and personal experience is, as evidence, tainted by purely private feelings. Thus it is vain to argue whether our fog, father's fog, grandfather's or great-grandfather's fog was the more severe, yellow, dangerous, death-dealing, particular or general. Ugliness and peril are singularly like beauty. They depend on the eye of the gazer or the mood of the feeler.

* *

Marshal Lyautey and Morocco was the subject of a brilliant lecture given to members of the Alliance Française in London last week. The lecturer was M. Roger Homo, who was one of Marshal Lyautey's lieutenants throughout much of his work in Morocco and his right hand man in the organisation of the great Exposition Coloniale

A Great Subject

Internationale held in Paris in 1931. A packed audience listened to M. Homo's description of the principles underlying the pacification of Morocco and their immediate results, after a few months only, in conserving Morocco to France during the war, which was an inestimable advantage not only to that country but also to the Allies, in preventing France's newly acquired protectorate from becoming a breeding ground for serious trouble in Africa and in the whole western Mohammedan world.

* *

M. Homo brought out well the importance of Marshal Lyautey's system of preserving both the Sultanate and the entire social and administrative structure which he found in the country, thus winning the respect of the native population, in the teeth, sometimes, of criticism directed against his method by theorists in Paris. Enlightened realism produced a suppleness of government directly responsible for the magnificent achievement into which the crowning effort of Marshal Lyautey's colonial career has blossomed, and that M. Homo declared to have been in part at least due to Marshal Lyautey's study of British colonial administration. Englishmen have the right to be proud that France's great soldier-statesman should feel indebted to our example. It is a pity that we should nowadays forget so often to profit by it ourselves.

* *

We have taken leave in the *Saturday Review* to chaff or criticise the mysterious solemnity of Mr. Montagu Norman on several occasions. But if, as is probable, he wished his marriage to be entirely his own affair, then he has our every sympathy. The reckless dissection of the private lives of Personages is, of course, one of the most unpleasant phases of the modern press, and it is not confined to the more "popular" newspapers, which have at least the excuse of catering for ignorant and tasteless minds. Indeed the only way in which one may be sure of keeping to oneself the things which belong to oneself is to remain forever undistinguished and unsuccessful—and to take particular care not to commit a murder or to allow any near relation to commit a murder.

Social news and even gossip are one thing; raking like a swarm of detectives in the affairs of private lives is another. It is, at the least, a gross, vulgar and ill-bred impertinence. And when it comes to interviews with the widows and friends of criminals and the "life stories" of criminals themselves—interviews and histories for which large bribes are offered—the business, tacked on to what might be literary effort, is nauseating and degrading.

An unemployed man was at Manchester bound over, like the volumes which were his undoing, for stealing books from a local store, and, in this case, the quality of mercy was surely not abused.

A Matter of Binding

For this wretched addict, who had been in the service of a bookseller before he fell on evil days, did not steal novels or volumes of malicious gossip or pseudo-medical publications about the problems of sex. Quite otherwise, classic literature was what he could not resist. If he had stolen first states or rare editions or those generally unattractive curiosities for which your bibliophile hankers, our sympathy would be lessened. Indeed in such case a heavy sentence might have been a sound warning to the undetected thieves who burgle—they have other names for it—the private libraries of friends. But this poor fellow was neither bibliophile nor kleptomaniac. Nothing so high sounding; but just a man who desired greatly the best sort of books and had no means of coming by them honestly.

* *

LAUGHTER IN COURT

[Dialogue in Court. The Clerk: Was he wearing it when arrested? Witness: No, Sir. . . . It was a horse and cart. Clerk: I thought it was a watch and chain.—*Daily Paper*.]

I quote above the most delicious "non sequitur"

I have seen for years,
And yet it is not really so absurd as it appears,
For I can quite conceivably imagine a case
In which I myself might have to face
A hostile witness who had described my verse
As "prose chopped into lengths" or something
even worse,

—(A description which is manifestly unfair,
When you take into consideration the care
And time
Which I have to expend to make the d—d things
rhyme)—.

The eminent K.C.
Who was conducting my case for an enormous fee
Would very soon no doubt
Turn this witness completely inside out.
"Now Sir," he would say, "I am going to suggest
That the only test
Of whether my client's compositions are verse or
not

Can be settled on the spot,
Kindly glance at these,
—And I insist on a direct answer please—,
Would not any reasonable person be able to say
Straight away

That this is obviously verse by the mere length of
the lines of type?"
And the witness having replied "*I thought it was a
piece of tripe*,"

There would be (according to the report)
The usual "laughter in Court"
Followed by numerous more or less
Jocular paragraphs in the popular press.

W. HODGSON BURNET.

Private Lives

De Omnibus Rebus

CERTAIN things can be said accurately and unequivocally about the 'Bus strike without clarifying the affair very much. This was a silly strike and a futile strike. It ended only less suddenly than it had begun and it brought no trace of advantage to the men, although it must have cost the company quite a lot, while it had inconvenienced the public a great deal. It was more than an "unofficial" strike; it was a revolt and a blow against the men's Trade Union. It was, on the surface of its course, wholly trivial; yet it carried with it a perfectly serious menace not only to the principle of collective bargaining but also to the permanence of the whole Trade Union movement.

So much springs clearly from the actual facts and events. Four months ago the L.G.O.C. made a new agreement with the Transport and General Workers' Union, the accredited agents of the company's workers. An essential part of this agreement, on which the company's willingness to forego substantial reductions of pay was based, was a speeding-up of schedule times on the company's routes. And this speeding-up was admittedly experimental, so that, if drivers and conductors found that in any particular instance an altered time-table imposed any real hardship on them, careful machinery was devised for testing the time-table and coming to an agreement with the union for its revision or maintenance.

Lame and Impotent

Yet at the end of last week the men suddenly refused duty at one of the company's most important garages, pleading hardship in a speeded schedule and refusing utterly to wait for the machinery of conciliation to be worked. This preposterous "dust-up" was not a symptom at all strange in post-war industrialism. What was strange was the extent to which this absurd "strike" spread, and the rapidity with which it spread. By Sunday more than half the workers were "out" and more than half the company's omnibuses idle. On that day strong statements were issued by both the Union and the company; the former warning the men that their action jeopardised all the advantages won by Union negotiation and the latter warning them that, unless duty was resumed at once, the whole principle of collective bargaining would go by the board. And the strike came to its lame and impotent conclusion on Tuesday.

Thus ended a ridiculous and disturbing episode. But what is left behind? It is no doubt true that the men were subjected to a kind of pressure and incitement quite familiar in Syndicalism. A trumpety dispute, which may be no more than a row between one conductor and a garage foreman, is at once known; it brings on the scene a swarm of Red agitators, armed with the gab, jargon, leaflets, and free drinks. Men who were level-headed become inflamed; rumours fly about, lies are rampant, talk is loose and soon a whole industrial pot

is boiling. Yes. But the men in this case, the drivers and conductors of the L.G.O.C. are well-known to all of us. They are a particularly decent set of fellows, not ill-educated as democracy counts education, and at all events sensible enough and well-informed enough to realise exactly how stupid, illogical, treacherous, dishonest and futile their strike was. Very likely there was a genuine local grievance at the beginning. There nearly always is. Companies and corporations are not always more just, generous, and reasonable than Trade Unions.

What Lies Behind

But that has nothing to do with the larger issue. When we see Welsh miners or even Yorkshire miners behaving in this way, we must shrug our shoulders. These workers live in a world of their own, isolated, cut off from contact with the world outside, reading only Socialist news, hearing only Socialist views, interested solely in their narrow affairs and in gambling. Their follies are at least explicable. This scrapping of bargains, flouting of honourable agreements; this defiant attempt to wreck their own Union; this complete want of a moment's thought as to how such a strike could possibly bring the smallest advantage—all these aberrations occurred among workers of the most enlightened type.

That is what is left behind and, candidly, it is disturbing. All very well to make fun of the mention of "Moscow" and to orate about English character as the bulwark of ordered civilisation. All very well to hurl compliments at the men and sympathy at their Union. Or to hint darkly that the organisation of this particular Union must be particularly rotten. But not convincing. This rather farcical strike seems to us to be a very timely warning of the grave perils which lie in continual and clever propaganda by the Powers of Darkness which the children of light make no intelligent or sustained effort to counteract.

It is, truly, not a long journey from Woodford to Calcutta, and what happens in the garages of the L.G.O.C. has its counterpart in the bazaars of India. Or let us take a swift trip—it must be in the Bremen or Europa—across the Atlantic and listen to the propagandists of the other Congress and hear what the ordinary folk of New York or Washington, without counting Chicago or Dead Man's Gulch, believe about Great Britain's tyranny in India, her slaughters in Ireland, her enslavements in Egypt. We allow Socialism, Communism and Bolshevism to get away with it. We are content to hold our head high—and averted. We are too proud to bother about outrageous lies, too honest to imagine that others can be so easily deceived by monstrous calumnies which the facts refute. Too proud and too honest or too lazy and too stupid? We had better ask ourselves, because the 'Bus strike proves how even the elect can be deceived. And we had better begin to stir and work for our own salvation.

A Survey of Foreign Policy

I.—First Principles. By John Pollock.

"FOREIGN Policy" is in reality a misnomer. One should say "National Policy." For the issues that hang on it have importance, not for the internal structure of a nation, its habits or its administration, but for its very life. Home policy has its own importance, often intense, for the individual. But to the nation, considered as an entity, it matters little at what hours food and drink may be bought, how taxes are raised, whether the Prayer Book be revised or cinemas opened on a Sunday.

Foreign policy is a very different affair. Here the least step taken directly affects the nation as such. Heligoland, that barren rock, was given away, as Mr. Punch had it, with a pound of tea: no one could tell then that its retention by us might have altered the course of European history, but so it was, and that despite the good reasons at the time for the exchange. Much that appertains to foreign policy is beyond the power of ministers or chanceries to control: as when the discovery of the route to the East round the Cape of Good Hope and the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks changed the course of the world's trade and destroyed the Venetian Republic as a Power. Since such mighty turns of Fate are impossible to foresee, it behoves men to walk more carefully in difficult paths, never knowing when they may be tripped up. Great minds, like that of Disraeli, will be prompt to seize great opportunities, but these are both rare. What the statesman who does not aspire to this rank should aim at doing for his country is to lay or consolidate foundations of strength, and avoid the seeds of weakness.

War and Peace

Clausewitz has laid down that war is but the continuation of national policy in time of peace. The sense in which this is true is obvious, and it is not by pacts bereft of force that it will cease to be so. The two most striking illustrations of this are the fate of Belgium in 1914 and the continuing hostilities between China and Japan to-day. Belgium was solemnly declared by the chief European Powers to be neutral and inviolable: that did not prevent her from being invaded and overrun. By the Kellogg Pact all the principal nations of the world renounced war for ever as an instrument of national policy: that has not prevented China from forming and paying numerous small armies with which to attack Japanese interests, beginning with railway concessions, or Japan from sending armies to defend her interests.

Save for the name, these operations on either side have all the characteristics of war. It is rare that the rulers of any nation deliberately want to go to war, except when they imagine, as did the Germans in 1914, that war must end in victory in a few weeks. Sir Norman Angel's celebrated thesis was redundant. History positively flings at our heads the lesson that war is an expensive,

often a crippling, undertaking; yet it remains the ultimate form of national policy, that almost everyone wishes to avoid, but that none dares to put from him as impossible, so long as it is not made impossible by some world-wide change in affairs. Such a change made private war impossible towards the end of the Middle Ages. Another made piracy on a serious scale impossible not more than a century ago. What change will make national war impossible, and when, we cannot foresee.

Without a clear understanding of these elementary facts it is impossible to form reasonable judgments on national, that is, on foreign policy. At the present juncture the whole of foreign policy—that of other nations no less than of our own—is governed by the fact that the Great War was not fought to a complete conclusion and was followed by a faulty Peace. I had the temerity to say this once in public to Marshal Foch: he was not perhaps pleased, but I think he did not disagree.

Faulty Foundations

Latterly there has been much surprised outcry at the revival of national unrest and at the shadow of war envisaged as possible at some indefinable date in a future not so remote as to affect the living generation. But this is only the logical result of the faulty foundations laid thirteen and fourteen years ago. Whose was the fault, and whether faults could have been avoided, are questions not necessary to discuss here. The question for us is how consequences of such faults can be avoided or mitigated, and how the shadow of the terrifying catastrophe that another war on a grand scale would be can be dissipated.

Foreign policy has become all-embracing. For us it comprises the problems of China, India, Egypt, European diplomacy, of our monetary system, of Imperial tariffs, of war debts, and of international communism. Had England seized the chance in 1919 and 1920 of freeing Russia from communist usurpation, the whole of the Far Eastern question, at present fraught with deadly danger to ourselves, would have assumed a totally different aspect. Had we been capable of a foreseeing (as we should have done) the American refusal to ratify the treaty of Peace, the principles of which were due mainly to the American President, the course of European diplomacy since the war would again have been totally different. Had Mr. Baldwin been able to avoid the crushing settlement of the American war debt accepted in 1922, not only would the economic restoration of the world have escaped the dangerous delay from which it now suffers, but the relations between all America's debtors—allies and enemies alike—would at the same time have escaped some of the worst influences weighing on them.

Starting from these premises we can go on to consider the situation as it confronts us to-day. What is our national policy in foreign affairs? What ought it to be?

Red Letter Days

An End and a Beginning. By Guy C. Pollock.

I SHALL not have anything more to say about shooting and Judy shall have a respite from publicity. And—come, cheer up—this is both a promise and a threat.

We have finished the season. We have spent Saturdays in walking prodigiously about the place with a small number of active, ardent guns and a small posse of beaters, taking little beats in the too vast woods, poking our noses into hedges and hedgerows, exploring every avenue in what is left of root fields, seeking the cock pheasants that err and go astray. Sometimes we flush a woodcock or get a sudden pigeon or knock over one of the very few rabbits that the farmers have allowed to live in this part of the world. Occasionally we drive a covey of partridges, and yesterday we saw a jack snipe, a rare and unexpected vision.

It is all great fun, especially when, as has happened several times, we enjoy, selfishly enough, the only belt of sunshine in a land of fog, mist or rain. One has time to look round and about, to and fro; to mark the austere loveliness of winter, the proud heads of tall and slender trees, the dignity and grace of beech and birch; one has time for the spirit which surges inside and for the things of the spirit, time to be sorry and glad and always grateful; there is no tapping of beaters' sticks drawing nearer relentlessly to stiffen a whole being to dutiful attention, no shouts of "over" calling one to kill. A cock comes sailing out of the wood or gets up noisily in the roots or flusters from the hedge, and, mostly, there is one cock the less to spoil the courtship of pheasants with his jealous angers. And, anyhow, all this exercise must be terribly good for our bodies; this leisure for appreciation cannot hurt our souls.

When I turn the pages of the game book or reflect on the season that is gone, I wonder how much or little of its red letters will stand the test of time. Some moments of expectancy and thrill, a few actual birds killed or missed, a day or two or an hour or two of a day almost more lovely than loveliness, some hours of companionship and scraps of conversation and hopes and strivings. But, of course, there was black lettering also—futile disappointments, wretched failures, hopes set too high, facts disregarded recklessly. There always are these things, but the future of thought, which is memory, can be kind to them. And the pheasants which seem impossibly high, the fast swerving partridge, the steady rises of birds in a well-filled, well-drilled beat—these were not wholly out of the picture.

And there was Judy; the ailing and pathetic, the apparently brainless puppy grown into the healthy, cheerful, and extremely clever dog; the puppy who seemed unable and unwilling to understand retrieving, now carrying cock pheasants in a tender and resourceful mouth; the puppy too timid to stir ten yards from a human knee, now seeking runners through any sort of obstacle. Still much

too wild and headstrong, still a thought too young, and always tempestuous. But I would not change her.

"Judy," I said to her on Saturday, "why have you hurt—anyhow annoyed—your keeper all day by showing that obvious preference for me? Was it to take a rise out of him? Because that might be dangerous. Or to prove your independence, your determination to live your own life? Because that is superfluous and certainly dangerous. Or because you are terribly fond of me? Because I don't always believe that.

Why not? Because love endureth all things and thinketh no wrong—and you, thinking all sorts of wrong, will endure nothing that isn't exactly what you want.

You don't see what all that has to do with it? No? I cannot cure your very short sight. And isn't it rather—? Well, perhaps it is. What should I call that sort of talk? Candidly now? Well, candidly I should call it *rodomontade*. It means? Oh, high-falutin' nonsense, bunkum and bosh. And why do I talk *rodomontade*? Because I am a sentimentalist. What's that? That, in this instance, is a person who puts a perfectly ordinary, well-bred, cleverish liver and white spaniel, who will not be worth much unless she learns discipline, into print—with gross embellishments.

Judy, come here—come here at once—do you see this whip? Oh, so I won't use it? Why not? Because you have something to tell me? All right, but you needn't climb all over me. You must whisper? What? . . . In March? And all of them for missus and me? I won't drown them? I'll promise not to drown *any* of them? . . . I promise, Judy."

SAFETY FIRST

We all of us, I'm sure, deplore
(Though Larwood still extolling)
The barracking and quarrels o'er
His so-called "body bowling."

The time has come, it seems to me,
Since batsmen are so brittle
For those who run the M.C.C.
To change the game a little.

Squash Rackets is a game enjoyed
By Englishmen and aliens;
The ball at least might be employed
When playing the Australians.

If bowlers even *threw* the ball
Their hardest at the wicket
'Twould scarcely hurt—Yes, hang it all!
Let's play them at SQUASH CRICKET!

W. H. B.

Colours and Colour

By George Sheringham.

MODERN science has told us what colours we can see, and why; it has named and numbered about four thousand; in America they have published a book which, it is alleged, contains a printed example of practically every shade of colour visible to the most colour-sensitive eye; also it has given us any number of new dyes and pigments; though no new colours. Science assures us that there are not going to be any new colours! Indeed science has told us just where we stand in the matter of colours, but it has told us nothing of value about the vastly more important matter, the use of colour. It has been quite unable to give us a guide as to how colour should be used: a standard by which we can use our four thousand shades of colour well: how we can obtain the greatest amount of beauty, variety and even utility from them. The text books do generally include a few paragraphs about complementary colours, but as these statements conflict with the practice of the great colourists they may justly be written off as worthless and misleading as a guide for actual use.

The Laws of Harmony

Artists from the earliest times down to the better productions of the present moment have, in the main, been in agreement about colour. The early Chinese painters and embroiderers, the great colourists of the Italian Renaissance, together with all the primitive painters of the East and West down to the painter of the latest acquisition of the Tate Gallery, are fundamentally in agreement as to the right use of colour. This consensus of practice and opinion should be evidence enough that there are laws of colour harmony not only observable but actually measurable and capable of exact definition. As the scientist has been unable to formulate a comprehensive system of colour harmonisation, why should not the scientist make a comparative study of the works of great colourists of all nations and so give the plain man his colour laws; and Governments something to make colour laws about!

Artists who have studied the history of the use of colour are aware of these laws, and the more gifted ones make daily use of them, but they are not equipped to set out their knowledge in an acceptable scientific form, nor is it their function.

With the great wave of mass-production sweeping over the world, the misuse of colour in productions of every sort and kind is becoming widespread and standards of taste are steadily declining as a result.

If an eighteenth century innkeeper hung a discordant sign outside his inn it was a matter of no importance; but when a modern brewer prints ten thousand enormous posters which break every known law of good taste (except decency, of course—we have police!) and distributes them wherever space can be hired for their display (and he will display the same poster in Kingsway and in

Stow-in-the-Wold), he is deliberately lowering the standard of taste in the community and his dirty work should be stopped. In this age it is useless for artists to protest against such posters, for have not shameless ones sold themselves? And artists as a body, through squabbling among themselves and deriding and abusing each other, have lost both the right and the ability to use a collective voice.

A Government Department may make some monstrous misuse of colour in some service of the State, and an individual artist may protest about this, but nobody pays the smallest heed; for it is but the expression of a personal view, and, perhaps rightly it is disregarded, as being an opinion and not knowledge. Scientists by collective attack and chilly agreement with each other have bludgeoned the modern world into listening to their edicts. A just revenge perhaps—for they were once disregarded as the artists are now. But, now, when science speaks Governments tremble; and laws, though delayed till the last possible moment, are eventually framed because the truth has been coldly displayed. It is high time that the truth about colour be displayed, and as artists cannot get their knowledge "over" why should not the scientists do it for them?

The Bus Problem

Mass production places the power of decision in matters of taste in the hands of business men—and they sometimes make strange decisions. An example of what one might call mere wilfulness in the use of colour is that which decreed that every bus on the London streets should be painted a brilliant red. There is no meaning in it, and as far as I can see it serves no useful purpose. They might as sanely be Prussian blue or cerise. I can imagine that the man in the 'bus would say "Why not red? I like red, red is a British sort of colour." Now I say—and being an artist my opinion is of course merely personal—that it is a good sort of red, but it is a good red in the wrong place; more exactly: it is a good red in a vast number of wrong places, and that, if I am right, makes the matter important.

London is a city of infinitely delicate colours—a grey city in a grey climate—and the introduction of masses of one rather violent colour destroys much of its beauty. As would the introduction of a cornet wreck the qualities of a string quartette. This is an opinion of which nobody will take notice. There are in this country, I believe, some ten thousand artists (God help us!). Could we speak collectively it is possible the powers might glance at this and similar matters.

But supposing the scientists spoke authoritatively (and of course coldly), supposing they said "the colour of these 'buses, posters, neon light-signs, telephone books, the incredible nonsense hung on the façades of Anglo-American cinema-

theatres and many other things is injurious to the public " . . . " the psychological reactions " . . . but, I am not a scientist, I only know what I should like them to say.

We live in an age that bows before science—

one might almost say its mental posture is abject—but I, for one, will raise an irreverent head and say that science in this department of colour-harmony is a sham and a humbug: it knows naught of its laws; and it is grossly neglecting its duties.

The Too Alternating Current

From a Correspondent

JUST about eight years ago there was set up, by Parliament, the London and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority, whose duty was defined as being " to provide or secure the provision in its district of a cheap and abundant supply of electricity." This was the spear-head of the new policy of nationalising, rationalising, socialising, bureaucratising (call it what you will) the whole of the electricity distribution services in this country. There are two or three other Joint Electricity Authorities, but in comparison with that which exists in London and the Home Counties they are negligible both in operation and in influence. This will be the more readily understood when it is realised that approximately one-fifth of the total current consumed in Great Britain is consumed in the London and Home Counties District, the figure of consumption being 2,240 million units per annum. The district comprises 1,797 square miles, has a population exceeding eight millions, and numbers within its bounds no fewer than forty-four local authority and forty-eight company authorised undertakings. It is obvious, therefore, that the London and Home Counties district, in which the electricity undertakings represent a capital expenditure of £96,000,000, has to provide the acid test of the great experiment which aims at the wiping out or the control of ordinary private and municipal enterprise in the realm of electricity distribution.

Under the old electricity Statutes powers of supply were granted either to local authorities or to companies, but in cases where powers were granted to companies there was an accompanying right to the local authorities to purchase on the expiration of a period of years. That being so, it has been the general aim of the Joint Electricity Authority since its formation either to acquire undertakings or to have transferred to it the purchasing powers of the councils. It is armed with authority to issue loans, and up to date the loan issue represents about £7,000,000, of which approximately £3,000,000 has been expended.

In eight years it has taken over local distribution undertakings in the following districts: Twickenham, Teddington, Ham, Hampton, Hampton Wick, Molesevs, Esher and the Dittons, Surbiton, Weybridge, Sutton, Cheam, Carshalton, Wallington and surrounding parishes, Dorking and district, and Leatherhead and district—an area representing 160 square miles and a population of over 300,000 out of a total area, as has been stated, of 1,797 square miles and a population of 8,000,000.

That may seem slow progress for a great scheme of national control which was to revive industry, to reorganise Great Britain's electricity services,

and to start a great new electricity era. That may be explained in part by the fact that of the thirty-three members of the Joint Electricity Authority many are delegates from various local authorities who do not necessarily possess technical or commercial knowledge of electricity and who are subject to the vicissitudes of election every three years.

The Joint Electricity Authority justifiably claims that in the areas which it has taken over prices to the consumer have been reduced; that is quite true. Municipalities and companies in areas which have not been taken over claim with equal justification that their prices also have been reduced; that is equally true. Indeed, in some of the municipal and company undertaking areas the prices are lower than those of the Joint Electricity Authority.

The point of immediate importance is that the Authority is looking forward to a considerable expansion of its activities, and it would be as well, therefore, for ratepayers and consumers in any district which happens to be concerned to make themselves acquainted with the conditions of the transfer of control and just what that transfer is likely to mean—whether it is to mean a guaranteed higher efficiency at a guaranteed lower cost, or not.

The Authority has no actual powers of compulsion. It can purchase by agreement, or it can negotiate with a local authority to take over the purchase power which that authority holds over a company, or it can make an agreed arrangement with a company under which arrangement the company proceeds with its own business provided the Authority has supervisory powers, access to books, the right to limit dividends, to decide on the amount of capitalisation, to demand expansion of service, and so forth.

Figures gathered about four years ago showed that 141 separate purchase rights were vested in eighty-eight local authorities maturing at varying dates over 32 company supply undertakings, and the more familiar method of the Authority has been to persuade the members of councils to part with these purchase rights so that the Authority, at the end of the specified period, is able to walk in, exercise those rights, and acquire the company undertaking.

That may be good or bad; it is not the purpose of this article to argue it one way or the other. But one thing is of the utmost importance and that is that ratepayers and consumers of electricity should make themselves more fully acquainted than they have bothered to do in the past with the situation as it exists and as it may develop in their own districts before their representatives take an irrevocable step.

After Dinner

By H. Warner Allen

WINE and tobacco smoke are generally speaking sworn enemies; yet most connoisseurs would agree that no meal quite attains perfection unless it is crowned by a good Havana cigar, smoked when the delicacies of aroma and bouquet have become a memory. Now it has pleased the American Tobacco Company to transfer the factories of some of the most famous Havana cigars to the United States. The move places them inside the heavy tariff imposed on all manufactured cigars imported to the U.S.A. The raw material, the Cuban leaf, they will be able to import under a much lighter duty.

They claim, as was to be expected, no end of advantages for the new system. Science will provide at Trenton, U.S.A., the ideal temperature and humidity which Nature did not always furnish at Havana. They will have lots of skilled labour working under modern conditions with no end of hygiene.

They will muzzle the ox that treads out the corn, all to the advantage of the consumer. Cigars will be cheaper, because those who roll them will not be allowed to smoke while they work. Is it worth it, disciples of Mr. Ford? Aren't you going to lose the something that counts just because you want to make a few more dollars? However, if it is dollars you are after, no doubt you will pile them up in U.S.A., but not, I fancy, over here, where the cigar smoker belongs to the few and demands that touch of art which mass production never knows.

I feel rather ungrateful in saying this because I have received some sample cigars rolled in U.S.A. They are excellent, as such samples must be, but they have not scattered my doubts. If cigars are to be anything in this country, where there is a tradition of taste, they must stand on a basis of not being a mere commercial proposition, so to speak. They must claim citizenship with good wine, which is the negation of modern hustle and economic methods.

In the matter of wine, up-to-date people are always trying to modernise tradition: they spoil the wine and sometimes make ill-earned fortunes. It may well be that the British smoker who is shy of American methods will be drinking a glass of Port *before* he lights his cigar. Please italicise that word "before"; tobacco utterly ruins good port. Now, as he drinks, he will likely enough be thinking of the Douro vintage. Nowhere in the world is tradition more precious. All the joy of the vintage works its way in some mysterious fashion into the wine as never did the happiness of Mr. Ford's workmen express itself in the artistic finish of their product.

Some of my happiest memories centre round Val do Mendiz, Sandemans' headquarters during the vintage, high above the Douro. I have still a bottle or two of Sandeman 1911 left and, when each one is called to fulfil its purpose, I live over again that combination of hard work and merrymaking,

which from time immemorial has been the essence of the vintage and good wine. There is no muzzling of the ox that treads the wine. The vintagers eat grapes to their hearts' content and there is no stinting of the wine allowance.

If American combines are laying their hands on cigars, they may, when the U.S.A. goes wet, try to extend the Fordian tyranny over wine. The thought is too terrible. Here in a glass of Sandeman 1911, I drink to those Cuban firms who still roll their cigars in the home of the leaf and to those good wine-growers, Don Roberto of Val do Mendiz, Don Luis Porto of Quinta Noval, and many more, who will fight to the death to keep the fermented juice of the grape from the abomination of mass production.

THE GOOD COMPANION

You are the good companion. I will show you
The beauty I have loved for years alone:

The hills I could not share—I did not know you—
Steep snaking roads, grey walls of moorland
stone,

Sad music of Welsh rivers. . . After these,
Unseen, far lands which dreaming has made
dear—

The soft spring pinewoods of the Pyrenees,
The flush of rhododendrons in Kashmir.

But lovelier lands than these you'll show to me:

Deep eyes like lakes returning sunset fire,
Your hair more haunting than my western sea,
And your soft breasts, my hills of heart's desire.
Weary with ventures I shall come to bless
The quiet meadows of your kindness.

GEOFFREY TREASE.

THE COWSLIP FIELD

Hidden beneath the rising downs it lay,
Close hedged about—the little secret field—
Lest to the passing idler on his way,
Too soon its fragrant treasure it should yield.
And we, turning from off the uplands bare,
Came on its loveliness in hiding there.
No need had we of foolish words to tell,
Each to the other, what our hearts knew well,
But swift and silent through the long wet grass
Heedless of wind and driving rain we went,
And going smiled, and smiled again, content
Simply among the cowslip's gold to pass;
While in the shelter of a friendly tree
Two small bedraggled dogs sat patiently,
Pondering doubtless in each doggy mind
The strange perversity of humankind,
And what new form of madness this could be
Their most loved gods possessing thus—and we
Picking those pale sweet, cowslips in the rain,
Knew for a moment, Time's eternity

And a deep joy that might not come again.

M. PARDOX.

Noel Coward

I Like him Because

BY ALPHA.

I FIND in his work as a playwright a cleverness with flashes of genius. Naturally that work has been uneven and it is certain that we have seen neither the last nor the best of it. But the brilliance that began with "The Vortex," uncomfortably full of hysteria and dealing with an unpleasant situation (but dealing with it in the grand manner), has gone on through this trifle and that success to find its natural height in "Cavalcade."

It seems to me no reason for belittlement, much less for dislike, to say that "Cavalcade" was episodic and merely a spectacle, not a play. Did Noel Coward pretend it to be otherwise? It is useless to assert that the whole thing was a great joke and that Coward's tongue was lodged against Coward's cheek. That is mere assertion. The achievement of this stage scroll of modern history, like its actual production, seems to me to have been unquestionable.

I admire so much the impudent courage of a man of letters who can face John O' Gaunt's speech and yet, to-day, sit down to write a toast to England that shall not be cheap, tawdry, or unworthy. And I admire even more the brain and spirit that could write the toast and, doing so, add something newly splendid to the literature of love of country.

I find or choose to find a genuine sincerity in Noel Coward's work. No man is compelled to run about the world prating of the ideals which goad him or of the splendours of his thought. But if these are found in the work of his hands, wood or stone or printed page, he is properly to be called sincere.

The versatility of the man makes me gasp. It is, perhaps, or certainly, a perilous versatility. To compose and sing and play; to write and act and produce; these are strangely diversified if cognate gifts. To use them all at will without showing the amateur in any is to be in one mind and body a Ministry of All the Talents. Before long Noel Coward will have to pick one gift and make the utmost of that. Otherwise he must fritter genius away in multiplying talent. Meanwhile the absurd richness of endowment is a cause for envious admiration.

I am excited by the adventurous youth in what he does and how he does it. It seems to be drawn from an unfathomable well of young daring, and it is likely that the Noel Coward of sixty five will be as debonair and reckless as the Coward of to-day.

He has brought new life to the British theatre and new arrangements to the English language.

He is young and strong and brilliant, armoured in self-confidence, but independent and thinking for himself.

With it all he is learning to be merciful.

I Dislike him Because

BY OMEGA.

I DISLIKE him in the first place because he is cheap. I admit, or rather claim, that he was not always so. "The Vortex" was made of good stuff. But he found out too soon, in the light of that success, that ingenious cookery would induce the reception by the public of the most minute alimentary particles as a full meal if served with sufficient sauce, and that the very sauce might be of a singularly attenuated variety. This indeed is the secret of culinary success as practised in mass-production kitchens. Mr. Coward is not the first man to apply the method to letters, but it is one that calls for reprobation and, I submit, may evoke a perfectly warrantable dislike.

As a rejoinder to exception taken on this ground, "Cavalcade" will in all probability be thrown at my head. But that is just where the culinary art comes in. "Cavalcade" proves my case up to the hilt. That work, important by its subject and its length (for it aimed at a presentation of thirty odd years) began with a real effort. The effort was successful. It took the audience: it even took in the audience, which remained to the end in a state of semi-intoxication largely assisted by an actress of genius. What could be more thin than the scene of the Titanic, what more miserably inadequate than the tricks employed to suggest the attitude of England during the War, what more trumpery than the final note of galvanised insanity plus the nausea of the commonest sobstuff? The same dodge may be detected as the basis of Mr. Coward's regular method: give 'em three or four good scenes at the start, and they'll swallow the rest.

I dislike Mr. Coward too—I mean his work of course—for his constant debasement of the theatre. Any form of art, if it is to command respect, must deal with a subject. Otherwise it becomes a mere method of passing time, more or less agreeably. Obviously Mr. Coward enables a vast number of persons to pass time agreeably. But this is not enough for one who aspires seriously to practise an art. Mr. Coward might reply that he does not so aspire. But other people claim it for him and so the public comes to take him for what he is not, namely a real dramatist demanding consideration as such, like, say, Mr. Frederick Lonsdale or Mr. Van Druten. I defy anyone to say what is the subject of "Hay Fever" or "This Was a Man." Hence Mr. Coward's work tends to debase the art in which he works, and this merits our dislike.

And besides, I dislike Mr. Coward's outlook on life. Men and women, seen through his spectacles, have the air of creatures moving amid puerilities, disconnected spineless things suggestive rather of the insects with which Mr. H. G. Wells in his happier vein once peopled the moon, than of our flesh and blood selves. Facile chatter, facile cynicism, facile sexlessness, facile success. That is the sum of Mr. Coward. I dislike it.

Music and Musicians

By Herbert Hughes

MR. Geoffrey Toye's re-appearance at the head of a first-class orchestra last Sunday, a minor event in itself, had a certain incidental significance to those of us interested in the work of English conductors to-day. We know that available orchestras can be counted on the fingers of one hand, that concert-giving is confined to the established organisations, that rehearsals are generally skimmed to the point of being heart-breaking.

Mr. Toye's easy competence in directing the London Philharmonic Orchestra suggested how much more might have been done with another six hours' drilling. He gave us a performance of Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony that was at least animated, but without the sparkle that Beecham would have extracted from it. After an untidy start, the Bach Concerto No. 3 in D minor for two violins and strings went its way very pleasantly, with the solo parts well played by Mr. Paul Beard and Mr. George Stratton. In the quieter passages one was conscious that the music was being executed gingerly rather than softly; the softness had caution rather than the assurance of complete masterfulness. The full beauty of the slow movement was not realised for the simple reason that the conductor had not arrived at that exact relationship between the solo instruments and the body of accompanying strings so fine, so exquisite and so imperative here. One might go on making the same sort of commentary on the remaining items in the programme (which embraced some glorious singing by Miss Eva Turner). I resist.

Conductors and Their Ways

Much more important is it to realise what I have called the incidental significance of Mr. Toye's association with the L.P.O. There is, of course, no such person as the perfect conductor. Conductors are born (of various species), or made. In this little island we have more than our share of the first order and a respectable number of the second (with whom might be grouped a still larger number of the not-quite-made). Henry Wood, Landon Ronald, Beecham, Coates, Harty, Goossens—here are born conductors. And think of their dissimilarities! Wood and Ronald are masters of orchestral accompaniment. Wood will give as fine a performance of a Mozart overture as anyone alive, yet wring the last revolting ounce of sentimentality out of Tchaikovsky, and remain the idol of the Proms. Ronald will whip the most laggard orchestra into activity, give a supreme rendering of an Elgar symphony, yet write a song like . . . never mind! Beecham may do queer things in *der Ring* and defy Handelian traditions with superb effrontery, yet he remains the most magical of musicians in England to-day and unsurpassed in Europe.

It was Kussevitzy, I think, who remarked that Coates is the greatest living conductor of Wagner's music, yet he does not appear at Bayreuth. Harty,

while the leading apostle of Berlioz, can put a good deal of white heat into Schubert's "heavenly lengths." Goossens, who appears to have followed Stokowski into perpetual exile, is a modernist of unusual poise and a man for whom any orchestra will play its best. Adrian Boult and Malcolm Sargent, popular as they are, have their foibles. Put a big Bach score in front of Boult, or a Brahms symphony, and he will give you a good sound performance, without excesses of any kind; but that is no proof that the next time he conducts *Walküre* at Covent Garden he will not make the Spring Song take on the undulating lassitude of a barcarolle. On the other hand, if you ask Malcolm Sargent to conduct the National Anthem he will approach the task with the kind of frenzy necessary for a tolerable interpretation of *Schéhéhérade* or the *Poème de l'Extase*. In the respective hands of other variously talented conductors like Basil Cameron, Julius Harrison, Julian Clifford, Anthony Bernard, Aylmer Buesst, Lawrence Collingwood and Constant Lambert decent music is safe.

In emerging from his underwriting activities at Lloyd's, and his more melodious operations at the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells, Mr. Toye, who appears to be a singularly well-balanced musician, does a gallant thing. He has done gallant things before. Those Ellis Concerts at Queen's Hall in 1914—which took place when many of the names I have mentioned were as yet unknown—played their part in our musical life and are not likely to be forgotten by the composers concerned. Gallant is the word. Let us wish him well.

A Sporting Event

Mr. Sidney Beer's association with the Turf is, I believe, more widely known than his interest in music. His début at the head of the London Philharmonic Orchestra the other evening was a sporting event of an unusual kind, revealing not the born conductor but the intelligent amateur. The players were obviously sympathetic, a significant feather in his cap. Dr. Malcolm Sargent was solo pianist in the A Major Concerto of Mozart, another unusual event, and performed his part very neatly.

It is so seldom that the Prince of Wales attends an orchestral concert that the event at Queen's Hall on Tuesday evening next, in aid of Westminster Hospital, will be specially notable. Dr. Adrian Boult will conduct the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the soloists will be the Misses May and Beatrice Harrison.

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THEATRE By JOHN POLLOCK

The Playhouse. Flies in the Sun. By Ivor Novello.

IT is difficult to say which is the more lethal—the society of purely vacuous persons, or pretended satire on them. In his new play Mr. Ivor Novello manages to combine these alternative disagreeables by starting with the latter but shambling, before many minutes are over, into the former. He would seem to have doubted whether to write a minor *School for Scandal* on the theme of *Juan-les-Pins* or to develop the attractions of that lipstick resort under the form of luscious melodrama. Despite the rocks of *Cap d'Antibes*, ingeniously reproduced by Mr. Hamilton Gay's scenery, so that in Act I you actually see some very passable headers taken into a pool hidden by those fine crags, the sand of its vulgar neighbour, redolent of cheap scent, and the waters of that stagnant bay, clouded with rouge and coconut oil washed from unfair bodies, form the obvious venue of Mr. Novello's action.

"*Flies in the Sun*" offers the spectacle of a certain society of eight or ten years ago with some thinly veiled suggestions of people in the limelight then, but now totally eclipsed. We do not get much of the god, but the carrion is there right enough: only the flies bred from it have a somewhat ancient and weary look, and the carrion has been dessicated into tame pemmican. From the pretended satire of Act I, we pass to the would-be melodrama of Act II, and finish up in Act III with a genuine excursion into sentiment of the most approved East Lynne type. The sum total is a picture of Continental vice as viewed by suburban virtue, and the effect very much like that produced by latterday pictorial advertisement of ladies' stockings and underwear, designed to make the unco' guid smack their lips at the all-but revelation which never quite comes. The intended thrill of intoxication resolves itself into a mildly bad taste in the mouth.

Whether Miss Gladys Cooper's powers are atrophied by an inhibition arising from uneasiness at the attempt to detach melo- from -drama, or are suffering from infantile paralysis (a malady that curtails full use of the lower limbs), must remain a mystery: probably the former, since the rigidity of her demeanour is reflected in the resolute stoniness of her expression. She is Jane Marquis, the most beautiful woman ever (how often we are told it!), and cannot see a man in the possession of a friend or even stranger, without the thought of theft passing to instant execution. But a vamp on this scale must have not only swell dresses, but seductions; moreover, no one with no other occupation in life could hold the place predicated of Jane Marquis in the best society, though it is true what we are allowed to see looks about the worst.

Mr. Ivor Novello himself gives a curiously unconvincing performance of a movie star stranded high and dry by the talkies. A little bit of description, but not acting, of that useless creature's experiences, rings true, but is quickly smothered by the avalanche of artificial silk and rabbit-ermine

emotion. The movie star, chucked by Jane, kills himself to prevent her from grabbing a nice young thing's nice young husband, Jane's daughter (young Rawdon to Becky Sharp) arrives in the nick to turn Jane at last into a True Mother, and that is that. The only good little fat for the flies is the portion of Mr. Denys Blakelock in the part of a Nancy—a pretence Nancy, too. No amount of Mr. Novello's sun can warm that word out of our mind.

Embassy. The Young Huntress. By Hugh Walpole.

Even the Walrus' best butter cannot give zest to fine words without a touch of parsnip. The butter in Mr. Walpole's second stage venture is spread soft and thick, the rhetoric is noble; but what we want in drama is the bitter tang of reality. The theme of "*The Young Huntress*" is one of perpetual interest—the struggle of the fascinating interloper for possession of a virtuous woman's husband and her final defeat by circumstances, that in this case are embodied in an earnest but much loved sister without whom, her affection and her reproof, the young interloper finds life barren. But everything goes wrong with it. We cannot believe in this young huntress, Joyce. Either, as we start by suspecting, she is vainly posturing before her own mirror and is an innocent little baggage, as ignorant of life as of everything else; but then she could not conceivably run away with a man who is not rich, nor amusing, and whom she does not love. Or she is a dangerous intriguer, living on other women's men, and has done the same thing before; but then her dominant sister would not allow her into such a humdrum, middle-class, domesticated circle as that of her friends Tom and Ellen Croy, nor would they be a prey to Joyce's taste.

Mr. Walpole, we suspect, started with a theory, and has tried to bend the necessities of life to fit it. The more energy he puts into the business, the further it becomes divorced from reality, and by the time we reach the big scene, where the sister takes to a dog-whip as a final argument to make Joyce give up Tom, they have ceased to have any life of their own and have become flotsam on the variegated stream of Mr. Walpole's eloquence.

The play is extremely well acted by the three women—Miss Margery Binner as Joyce, Miss Marjory Clark as Sister Rose on perpetual watch from her moral tower, and Miss Mary O'Farrell in the part of the abandoned wife. Mr. Michael Hogan would have a better chance as the erring husband if he were allowed to be, and to make up as, ten years older. Tom's youth is one of the errors that puts the whole action out of gear. It is not the only one.

Entertainments

<p>QUEEN'S THEATRE (Gerrard 4517) Wednesday, Feb. 1 at 8 (Subsequently 8.30) First Matinee Saturday, Feb. 4 at 2.30 BARRY JACKSON presents— "HEAD-ON CRASH" By Laurence Miller GEDRIO HARDWICKE FLORA ROBSON</p>

NEW NOVELS

Reviewed by ANNE ARMSTRONG.

The Phoenix and the Dove. By Cunliffe Owen. Rich & Cowan. 7s. 6d.

Witches' Cauldron. By Eden Phillpotts. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

The Doll. By Eleanor Morse. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

The Mummy Case. By Dermot Morrah. Faber & Faber. 7s. 6d.

"Pacific." By R. Carse. Barker. 7s. 6d.

FOR a stage the court of Queen Elizabeth of England, the home of the third Earl of Southampton at Cowdray, and the Tower of London. For actors, Queen Bess herself, Henry Wriothesley, third Earl of Southampton, and Will Shakespeare.

And so Mr. Cunliffe Owen, with his setting and his actors, has tackled a task the size of Shakespeare or Elizabeth themselves. And there is no shirking, no frightened half-truths; it is, in fact, so stimulating that I still have a sneaking feeling that Mr. Owen was there himself—a spectator of the mad intoxicating business that was life at the English court of the sixteenth century. No half-truths and no shirking? No, indeed; and if ever a spade has been called a spade it is here in "The Phoenix and the Dove."

It is not an historical novel; not, that is, in any usual sense of the word. Mr. Owen has made use of certain facts, of certain surmises, and used them to his own ends.

Shakespeare (and this is no misprint—I am following Mr. Owen for local colour) may have loved Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, who was, we believe, most assuredly his patron; he may have dedicated a very great deal of what he wrote to this very beautiful god-like young man; Lady Elizabeth Vernon may have been mistress to both of them, and the Queen's secret (this, in my opinion, could well have been omitted) may have been so or may not—be that as it may, Mr. Owen has weaved these strands to his own pattern; and a daring pattern at that.

If he needs apology, it is there in the stark realism of his atmosphere. The Queen—"The more he saw of her, the more incredible she became. To think, too, that, despite her amorousness, no one had ever penetrated beneath those stiff embroidered folds, whose incrustations of gold thread and seed pearls he could now feel, rubbing against the softness of his cheek. The old body above him was getting very affectionate, leaning over him, stroking his hair, whispering to him, till he felt the odour of her ancient breath, and the words hissed out through gaps in the worn-down teeth and shrunken gums."—This may not be a picture that appeals to you but it is at any rate a striking one, and, remembering the legends and the stories that are rife of the Elizabethan court, quite probably a true one.

A spade is a spade throughout, but if only historical novels could be more like this one, which is obviously not really a historical novel—why, then, the books that I should read and enjoy would

be far greater in number. Mr. Cunliffe Owen at all events has lots of courage—and he knows how to excite controversy.

"Witches' Cauldron," by Eden Phillpotts, is the second volume of a trilogy which centres round Avis Ullathorne. The first, "Bred in the Bone"—though Mr. Phillpotts commanded us to notice that character, and not crime, inspired it—had a most satisfying murder in its pages; Avis Ullathorne being chiefly responsible for the crime. In this new book she becomes so intrigued by the idea of killing off all those who in any way oppose her wishes that in the end she is slightly ridiculous—which is a pity. Her son Peter is a strong upstanding figure of a man, and Avis naturally does not wish him to marry Unity and have weak, sickly children by her. So what does the fond mother do? Inveigles Unity—and she was so stupid in contrast that I could have shaken her with the greatest pleasure—out on to the moor and pushes her into a pool. Ah—but there is more to come. There is a girl (a fine, upstanding figure of a girl!) who lives in a nice big house up the hill, and Avis decides that Peter and she shall mate. But unfortunately the girl's father wishes to marry Avis and will not allow his daughter to marry Peter unless he marries Avis. So, quite simply, and with mother love getting the better of her, Avis quietly dispatches the rich farmer. I don't know . . .

It is, of course, beautifully done, as only Mr. Phillpotts knows how—but I fancy that Avis Ullathorne is rather running away with him, and I dread to think of what may happen in the third and last volume when it comes. I don't know . . .

"The Doll" is a light little, bright little story. Orchard marries Kent. Kent is a rotter. Kent runs off with his hospital nurse. Orchard is very upset indeed. Orchard gets very friendly with another man—and so it goes on, and if you don't mind knowing on every page what is bound to happen on the next, you will probably not notice that you are reading to the end. It becomes a habit.

An Oxford Don, a Professor of Egyptology, an undergraduate rag, a fire and a vanished mummy and you have some of the ingredients of one of the most ingenious mystery stories I have read for some time. It is called "The Mummy Case," and it is by Dermot Morrah.

How a meerschaum pipe ultimately led to the unravelling of a very tangled skein I must leave to you to find out, but here is a word of warning—don't skip, don't turn to the last page before you have read the first, but read it straight through from the beginning to the end (it's worth it) and you will then discover what really did happen.

"Pacific" is not a pleasant book nor is it about pleasant people; nor, by the same token, is it a book that I would be prepared either to recommend or to condemn—but it is a book in which I personally found a quality of greatness.

The sea and a ship; the men who sailed in her, and a woman who stowed away in her; and the consequent reactions of the men during the thirty days which have to elapse before they can land the woman.

The men are of mixed nationalities, and with two exceptions their reactions are unpleasant. But Mr. Carse can paint a picture and tell a tale (almost Conradesque in feeling) in such a way that the ship and her occupants are most vividly

alive. There is no explanation of the woman's life before she stowed away and no indication (save what we choose to imagine) of her ultimate end—and it is a testimony to Mr. Carse's power as a writer that we are content to have it so.

The Interlude of Empire

Egypt Since Cromer. By Lord Lloyd. Macmillan. Vol. I. 21s. net.

REVIEWED BY A. WYATT TILBY

FIFTY years have passed since Britain occupied Egypt. During the first twenty-five we achieved much in the way of material reconstruction and social reform that seemed of enduring value and importance; it was a solvent and progressive Kingdom when Lord Cromer left Cairo in 1907, and if the people seemed unappreciative of his work the departing statesman could still console himself with the thought that the children of the blind are able to see. But during the second twenty-five years much, if not most, of what was accomplished before has been undone. What is the reason?

It might be thought at first sight that there has been some decay in the type of administrator sent out, and that with the almost simultaneous retirement of Cromer, Milner, and Curzon this country had ceased to produce the benevolent despot. If that were so it would be the end of the British Empire as we know it. But Lord Lloyd's sympathetic study of the men who followed Cromer and preceded his own too brief rule at Cairo sets that doubt at rest. Perhaps he rates Sir Eldon Gorst a little too high; almost certainly he sets Kitchener a little too low. But both were in the great tradition; and if Allenby was more soldier than statesman, and Lord Lloyd himself more statesman than soldier, not even hostile criticism can suggest that there has been any noticeable declension of ability or authority from the time when Cromer and Milner laid the political and financial foundations of Modern Egypt.

Nor can it be maintained that the lesser officials are unworthy of their trust. True, they are open to the charge of living too much among their documents, of thinking on paper, and being out of touch with popular feeling. Lord Lloyd points out in a telling passage that the pressure of correspondence has made it very nearly true that they have no time to spare for casual callers. But this worship of the files is as ancient a disease among bureaucrats as mental reservations among the clergy or the instinct to delay and raise fine points among lawyers, and though the epidemic has certainly appeared in Egypt, it seems not yet to have assumed the virulent and deadly form it has taken for many years past in India.

It is no sufficient explanation, then, of the decline of British prestige in the last twenty-five years, to blame the men on the spot. The real trouble, in Lord Lloyd's view—and he supports the accusation with chapter and verse—lies in London, where "the picture of Whitehall disclosed by official despatches is, in fact, bewildering to a degree—a

violent and purposeless oscillation that inevitably suggests a panic instability."

This grave condemnation and damaging verdict will of course be disputed by official or official-minded apologists. Unfortunately neither condemnation nor verdict can be disproved by events and evidence, which are the only things that matter in this connection, and for our present credit, if not for the future of the Empire, we shall do well to look for the causes of this oscillation and instability in high places.

Foreign nations may possibly profess to regard the whole thing as evidence of some long-distance plan of conquest or assimilation, pursued with a Machiavellian subtlety that will only reveal itself gradually to an amazed and admiring posterity. Legends proverbially die hard, and the legend of the hypocritical Englishman received a great accession of believers when we went to Egypt in 1882 and, professing that our occupation was merely temporary and for a special purpose, stayed there permanently and conquered the Sudan as well.

But whatever may have been true of Mr. Gladstone's desire to get out of Egypt or Lord Salisbury's determination to stay there, nobody is likely to believe that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald or Mr. Baldwin have any long-distance plans of conquest, or indeed any plans at all. That indeed is the difficulty: Downing Street is drifting, not planning, and we escape the major charge of hypocrisy—which at least indicates purpose—only to meet the minor count of insincerity.

Lord Lloyd has put his finger on the root of the trouble in a sentence. Our policy, he says, is directed not towards achievement but escape. In other words, our rulers no longer believe in themselves, or their mission or their message; they have lost heart. Here, as in India, there is always the implication that we want to evade further responsibilities, to reduce our commitments, and to get out—with a gentlemanly bow and a peroration about democratic progress (which not even the loud-speaker will believe) if we can, but in any case to get out.

This of course is not a policy at all, but the negation of policy, a turning tail and covering up the retreat with a phrase and a gesture. It is not confined to Downing Street; for this negative and woolly attitude of mind, this temporary loss of moral courage and intellectual foresight and direction, is responsible for much of the creeping paralysis that affects the government of business as well as the business of government in this nation to-day.

A MINER AT OXFORD

WHAT is the secret of Oxford? By virtue of what spell does it capture even its enemies, the rebels by nature or upbringing against tradition and the unfairness of things as they are? The reviewer hoped that he might find an answer—or perhaps a denial of the magic—in a book which declares itself to be the view of a young Yorkshire miner transported by a scholarship to the quadrangles of the University ("A Pitman Looks at Oxford," by Roger Detaller. Dent, 5s.).

He found neither the answer nor the denial. Practically every word that the pitman has written might have been the work of a public school boy who happened to have a similar intellectual outlook. Of course he is inclined to attribute to the injustice of things as they are the unpleasant experiences which befall every undergraduate for the good of his soul. He certainly suffered far less from shyness than the average public school boy, and the discomfort he felt from time to time because he might have said or done the wrong thing had nothing whatever to do with class or caste.

Undoubtedly our miner undergraduate was a very nice fellow. His early life had made him sensitive about one or two little things of no importance. For example, he describes the "besir-ing" habit of college servants and town tradesmen as "the most serious feature of class social observances." That was at the beginning of his fourth year, when he himself should surely have grown into the not ungraceful custom of using the word "sir" himself. "Sorry, sir," is or used to be a phrase that every Oxford undergraduate used instinctively when he had unwittingly inconvenienced someone else, whether that someone else was a duke or a buttery boy.

The only real silliness in his book is to be found in his remarks about alcohol. Surely it does not need a public school education to prove that "Athletics and drink run together" is simply untrue. No doubt after training your athlete may take advantage of a bump supper to indulge in jovial excess and is very much the better for it. Indeed, the reviewer believes that the pitman observer would have learnt a great deal about life and profited even more from his Oxford career if he had had the courage to indulge himself in this respect just once or twice. There is a temperance that is fear, the fear of betraying the true self that lies below the respectable exterior. Anyhow the reviewer cannot believe that scores of undergraduates carry "a bottle in both jacket pockets and a further couple, one in each fist." If they do, where is the harm in it—except to the clothes?

However, criticism apart, Mr. Detaller, if that is his real name, betrays a real understanding of, and affection for, Oxford and it is to be hoped that many men of his sort will gain scholarships there.

His description of punting on the Cher as "his one positive achievement in Oxford" is much too like a nightmare to be true. He achieved much more than that and his book is a proof of it.

EAST AND WEST

The Tragedy of Amanullah. By Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah. Alexander-Ouseley. 18s.

NO one could fail to make a good and lively story of the tragic or tragi-comic reign of Amanullah, sometime Ameer of Afghanistan, who began with so much of promise, wandered through so much of weakness and folly, ended with so much of obstinacy and blindness, and gave way to Bacha Saquo, the bandit-usurper, son of the water-carrier, without fighting for his kingdom or dying, like an Afghan, on the bloodstained steps of his throne.

And assuredly Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah, well known to social and journalistic life in London, has made a most readable book of it. He has dealt with the history, the culture, the customs, and the religion of Afghanistan in order to give the right setting and the true perspective to his readers, and he has much that is extremely interesting to say about the essential, if mystical or metaphysical, difference between East and West. His English style is not at all impeccable, but it is surprisingly clear and good in an Afghan writer. His prejudice and bias are obvious, but they give colour to his narrative and force to his conclusions. His flattery of Mohammed Nadir Shah, the present ruler, the successful soldier who saved the kingdom which Amanullah had surrendered to the bandit, is rather nauseating, but it is an inevitable element in such a book as he set forth to write.

Whatever opinions may be held of the author's historical chapters or of his views on Afghanistan's foreign policy, he is almost certainly right in believing that Amanullah's downfall was not chiefly due to the ridiculous—ridiculous because we and rival countries abased ourselves and outdid ourselves in bidding for his favours—tour of Europe. Its causes were seated deeper in a weakness of character, an indecision of purpose, and a system of political corruption which have destroyed and will destroy men greater than Amanullah. But, without question, this tour and the high-speed reforms and Westernisation of which it was the culmination, played a large part in the loss of his too easy inheritance.

Well, here is the tragedy of Amanullah, who bulked so largely in our news and newspapers, who was almost a popular idol with the English crowd—as the lovely and much Westernised Queen Souriyah certainly was—for whom most of us have still a sneaking affection. It is very well done on the whole.

Supper Time. By F. E. Baily. Collins. 7s. 6d.

Bertie Telford-Brown was a worker. He had made a great deal of money and his relaxations were golf and deceiving his wife. The two children, a son in the Army, and a daughter married to a waster, took their pleasures as and when they found them.

Not a very edifying story this and the framework is of the thinnest, but some shrewd characterisation has padded out the skeleton until it appears robust enough on the surface. It is a book easy to read and, perhaps luckily for us, equally easy to forget.

Indian Books

THE IMPACT OF WEST ON EAST

The Cambridge History of India. Cambridge University Press. 30s.

THIS volume is the sixth and last. The period—1858 to 1918—is of absorbing interest. Earlier volumes bring the history down to the point when British supremacy is no longer contested. Hitherto, the question has been "Who shall rule?" Now it is "What will the new rulers make of India?" Here is an ancient civilisation and culture, rich on the side of religion and philosophy. How will it react to the impact of European education and modern science and invention? The historian is naturally concerned mainly with the political results of the experiment. Our school primers may evolve lofty platitudes on the unimportance of Kings and statesmen, but, when all is said, history is politics, and loses itself in the sand when it pursues any subject that does not bear on that theme.

Politically, then, the most striking result is Indian nationalist sentiment. This was non-existent before British rule. There was a genuine Hindu feeling, but it was more religious than political. It was not shared by the Musalman. Indeed, it was directed against him quite as much as against the European. It was not until the English language supplied a common speech, and English railways abolished distance that Indian nationalism became possible. This national sentiment is, from the first, haunted by a dualism from which there is no escape.

On the one hand, it demands that everything shall be Indian. English Civil surgeons wring their hands when an elected local authority devotes its funds to native drugs unknown to their pharmacopœa! But on the other hand it cries out that India must be in the van of progress. An oriental revival, fiercely hostile to everything Western. A blind and feverish adoption of Western things, refusing to believe that any is unfit for India. So the pendulum sways, often inside the mind of the same individual, for the oriental mind holds contradictions easily. In politics, there was no Indian model to copy. Eastern despotism, the simplest form of government ever devised, is the only one that India has ever evolved for herself. So the demand has been for a copy of English institutions. And the rulers, with many misgivings, have supplied Municipal Councils, and are about to equip a continent torn by faction and riddled with intrigue with a full-blown parliamentary democracy.

Whatever our fears for the future, we may take some pride in the past. There is something to criticise. The combination of doctrinaire liberalism with jealous personal autocracy doomed Lord Morley's term of office to failure. It would not be easy to hit on any subject on which his judgment has proved to be right. One may marvel how such a nonentity as Lord Chelmsford ever held the reins of power. But two men stand almost alone in a host of able administrators and wise rulers. And even they had the welfare of India

at heart. History shows no instance of foreign government so bent on the good of its subjects.

This volume is written by Indian officials, and has the merits and defects of their work. It is accurate, sober, well arranged, embodying the information scattered through a multitude of blue-books and official utterances. When so rich a feast is offered to readers, it is ungrateful to suggest that they will be few! And yet—in the clubs or at dinner parties, it has not been observed that men crowd round the retired Indian Civilian and hang on his words. How many will pluck the heart out of the mysteries of "mamlatdar" and "abkari"? Will "the indigenous schools of Bengal" and the more euphonious "vidyalaya" be equally popular?

Ah well. Let us hope piously that the aspiration of the preface will be realised, and that those concerned (scilicet the Round Table Conference) will grasp "clearly and firmly the historical background without some knowledge of which political decisions become matters of mere sentiment and chance."

BEGGING THE QUESTION

Political India. Edited by Sir John Cumming. Oxford University Press (Milford). 3s. 6d.

THIS handbook on Indian politics consists of a series of essays by highly qualified persons upon the history of its subject and the outlook, so that, within the limits set for it, it is a publication of great authority.

Unfortunately from the point of view of those who, like the present reviewer, flatly disbelieve in the possibility of the success of any form of self-government for India extending beyond such bodies as village councils, the whole purpose of the book is spoiled by the begging of this question. Lord Irwin begins by assuring us that "whatever the difficulties in the path of the development of democratic government in India—and they are as formidable as they well can be—there is no escape from them."

The whole book is conceived on these lines. Wading from chapter to chapter the reader passes from the nightmare to the padded room and then back again to the nightmare, the whole culminating in the demand of certain witnesses before the Lothian Committee that every adult man and woman should have a vote. About this Lord Zetland remarks "that few of the half million villages in which they dwell are approached even by a metalled road; . . . while amongst them they speak an immense number of languages, scarcely one in ten is capable of understanding the written word of any language."

Upon questions as critical as what sort of treatment British capital invested in India is likely to receive from a responsible Indian Government we hear next to nothing. The impression previously held by the reviewer that self-government for India is a fantastic and visionary political theory has been greatly strengthened by an examination of "Political India."

TWO GOOD THRILLERS

WHAT has Shakespeare to do with murder? So most people ask on seeing Mr. Neil Gordon's "The Shakespeare Murders" (Arthur Barker, 7s. 6d.). It would be unfair to give the answer, for in the discovery of it lurks the solution of the mystery that taxed Inspector Fleming's powers to the utmost: we should only make clear that the book does not deal critically or historically with the murders committed in the course of the plays by the gentleman whose name appears on the cover. Inspector Fleming was not alone in the chase. No: he had remarkable assistance from Peter Kerrigan, shady as that gentleman's antecedents were, from the moment when Peter picked a pocket outside Euston Station and knew that a man lived who hoped by some undisclosed means to win a cool million pounds. Peter was instantly after that million or part of it; Inspector Fleming was after some other persons, also after it; so the two coalesced, with the result as you shall read.

Neither shall we disclose how many murders are committed, nor by whom: all we will consent to reveal is that they are inspired by logical motives (which often is not the case in detective stories), and that the tale of them is worked out with very great ingenuity in a crescendo of excitement. "The Shakespeare Murders" is a glorious thrill. Peter is a fascinating character and as amusing as

he is delightfully real. Old Lady Caroline is almost more so. Mr. Neil Gordon has written a brilliant crook story. We congratulate him and his readers.

"Murder in Maryland," by Leslie Ford (Hutchinson, 7s. 6d. net), goes back to an older formula, but none the worse or the less welcome for that. The author is in the direct line of descent from that great master of detective fiction, Anna Katherine Green, and arrests our attention by working up psychological interest in a whole group of people, all affected by the murder and many in a position to be suspected of it. It is a method which demands care and severe labour, and, when successfully used, as here, produces a far more exciting effect than the slapdash style often employed by the modern detective writer.

Antoinette Wyndham, that terrible old spinster living almost alone in her lovely "Colonial" house in a small Maryland town, cruelly imposing a wicked will on those under its sway, was found in her bed, poisoned. Mr. Ford brings all the dead woman's family, and almost the whole town, within the orbit of the mystery, devoting great art thereto and withholding his best cards to the end. The picture of this country-town society of the Southern States is of real interest. "Murder in Maryland" is a book to read, not only for its thrill, but for its thrill too, emphatically.

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ELEPHANT CONTROL

"Elephant." By Commander D. E. Blunt. East Africa. 12s. 6d.

COMMANDER David Enderby Blunt, the author of "Elephant," was employed for six years in the task of Elephant Control in Tanganyika, and herein lies the part of his book which is at once most interesting and of the greatest permanent value. It is only to be regretted that he devotes no more than nineteen of the 250 odd pages of his book to this fascinating subject.

Briefly, his job was to teach the wild elephants of the country to keep off the grass. His methods of doing so were drastic but the only possible ones. He killed the raiders—as many of them as possible. Of all animals the elephant is probably the most intelligent. He rarely needed to be told twice, and by this method it has been proved that the spread of civilisation or at least of cultivation should in no wise interfere with the existence of the elephant, as there are huge tracts where they can live happily, which are quite unsuited to the service of man. Commander Blunt gives it as his considered opinion that provided these methods are continued, he sees no reason why the elephant should ever cease to exist.

Of all our great fauna there can surely be none which we should do more to preserve. Quite apart from his tremendous interest to the naturalist, he is one of the most courageous, and certainly the most affectionate in his family life, of all big game, and the only dangerous animal that can be trained to be at once the servant and the friend of man.

The rest of the book is of less permanent value, as it tells us little that has not been discussed before. There are some exceedingly interesting stories of elephant and buffalo shooting, a re-hash of a good deal of scientific data and (braving the inevitable dispute royal) a discussion on rifles. Incidentally was it necessary to mention the very unpleasant facts about the elephant's reserve water supply?

And, further, we must lodge a protest against both the taking and the publishing of the photograph of elephants being stampeded by an aeroplane. If such photographs are taken (a thing no sportsman should do) they should not be used by any reputable author or publisher. It may be impossible for Imperial Airways to avoid stampeding elephants, but surely it is not necessary for them to descend as close as they did on this occasion.

R. M.

Writing for Money. By Sidney Horler. Nicholson & Watson. 6s.

In spite of rather a catch-penny title, Mr. Horler's book is worth the six shillings asked, unless one buys it in order to find inside the secret of making money from one's pen. It is naive, it is impudent, it is amusing, it is bombastic, and has all those qualities which go to make good, if light, reading.

Mr. Horler's criterion is royalties and this latest effusion should, if only on account of its title, make impressive reading, at least for Mr. Horler when his royalty statements come in.

CORRESPONDENCE

Why Buy American Goods?

SIR,—Do British citizens realise that every pennyworth of goods they buy from the United States, or from American-owned branch factories here or in Canada, weakens the £ and adds to the War Debt difficulties? Is it fully realised how monstrously one-sided our trade and financial relations with the United States have become?

Britain for generations has been the United States' best customer. Let us take the official dollar returns of the United States itself. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, the United Kingdom imported merchandise from the U.S. during the period of 1921-1926 of an average annual value of \$939,412,000—that is, we spent \$4,697,060,000 on U.S. imports in five years. In return, the U.S. bought British exports valued at \$1,778,905,000.

A similar disproportion is evident in succeeding years. In 1929, for example, the United States bought goods from us valued at \$329,755,000 and sold to us goods valued at \$848,000,000. Last year we supplied the United States with merchandise valued at \$135,452,000, and bought from them goods valued at \$455,561,000.

This one-sided arrangement continued in 1932. During the first eight months of the year—the latest period for which official American figures are available—we bought from the U.S. goods valued at \$183,436,134, while the U.S. bought British goods of a total value of \$50,053,542.

During all these years Britain has struggled to make heavy payments to the United States on account of War Debts. Our payments, immense as they have been, have made little impression upon the Capital amount of our debt: by far the larger part has been for interest. Still we go on buying with our depreciated £. This means that—at present—for every £10,000,000 (at par) worth of goods we buy from the United States we must pay, roughly, £13,300,000, while for every £10,000,000 worth of goods the United States buys from us she pays (at par) only £8,700,000.

Is it not clear that we cannot pay the debts and, at the same time, continue to buy from the United States more than three times the amount of goods she buys from us, on such uneven terms?

To buy American goods, either directly or indirectly, pounds must be converted, on extremely onerous terms, into dollars. The United States, in effect, forces us to choose between her goods and our bond.

212, High Holborn,
W.C.1.

THEO FEILDEN,
Director-General,
The Empire Trade League.

Examination Worship

SIR,—Your correspondent of last week hardly appreciates the difficulties of Public School masters, who are finding it increasingly difficult to persuade parents that the education they give is worth the price paid for it.

Everything depends on good publicity. Hence it is most important that no boy from the school should go in for an exam. and fail, as that would be bad publicity for the school. Consequently all the school's educational resources are devoted to perfecting the scholarship and certificate getters. The education of the remainder may be judged from an interview with the average Public School boy.

Even in games (the only part of the curriculum taken really seriously) the same principles apply. These are now dominated by so-called Games Masters, who have to justify their existence by producing bands of professional gladiators, trained to beat the products of the Games Masters of other schools. The idea that games are intended to be a healthy recreation for the average boy is quite obsolete.

Consequently the whole resources of the school are devoted to the production of a score or so of professional athletes, and a similar number of anaemic scholarship getters. This may not be education, but it is publicity; and the parent should remember that though he pays the piper, it is the headmaster who calls the tune.

H. K. TREVASKIS.

Reade House, Farnham Common, Bucks.

Cricket's Dangers

SIR,—I am driven to think that the memory of our cricket scribes is shorter than mine. I give you an opportunity to retaliate by suggesting that it was not the present George Gunn, but his uncle (?) William, the Colossus, who achieved the deed of derring do referred to by *The Saturday Review*.

But what I sat down to say, apropos the grotesqueries and taradiddles of the present controversy is that no scrivener or scribe has referred—so far as I know—to the one case of a bowler killing a batsman in England. George Summers was the Derbyshire batsman who was killed in a match. The bowler's name I have forgotten. This occurred, I feel sure, in 1872. Summers was hit in the face.

There has been a thousand times more fuss made in Australia in the past three weeks than over any matter connected with cricket in my seventy years of life.

Chelsea, S.W.3.

ROBIN H. LEGGE.

The Umpire's Decision

SIR,—In view of the long interval which must elapse before the next Imperial Conference, would it not be advisable to refer the Anglo-Australian leg-theory dispute to the League Council?

The M.C.C. would then be free to concentrate on a solution of the Sino-Japanese trouble in Manchukuo.

Barnet.

HOPEFUL.

Snuff and Service

SIR,—Can you tell me whether Messrs. Hoares of the Strand are the only surviving private bank remaining in London? Glyn Mills is linked up to a combine now, I believe; Drummonds is part of the Royal Bank of Scotland, though its partners still hand out snuff to their clients; Goslings and Coutts are mere branches of an octopus. It takes one back. I'm not sure banking in those old days was not as serviceable and as profitable.

Ledbury, Glos.

T. HENRY WHITE.

[So far as we can discover, Mr. White is correct. As to the respective merits of the two systems, that is a subject for argument.—Ed. S.R.]

The Church

SIR,—If I may, I do protest against the erroneous and glib use of the term, the Church, when Churches are the only distinguishing mark of the English opinions of what constitutes a Church and Religion. There being one God, there is only one religion, and so one Church.

"Should the Church Advertise?" was argued in the *Saturday Review*. Both answers were wrong. The Church testifies: only Churches advertise.

Sussex.

M.N.

The Technocrats

SIR,—The man who first re-named pink, calling it "crushed shrimp," did a great service to the makers of pink dyes. He provided a new, and therefore interesting name for an old idea.

The inventors of technocracy, the name which has recently superseded "rationalisation" in the leader-writer's vocabulary, have done much the same. For the basic idea of technocracy is a very old idea. It is that man could do much less work, and yet still enjoy all the comforts of civilisation to which he is accustomed.

It is a very old idea, and a very popular one among those who think, and a very good one. It expresses the whole purpose of our organised civilisation. It is rationalisation applied to consumption as well as to production; the increase of consuming power without its hitherto inevitable counterbalance of an even greater increase in producing capacity.

The only thing that nobody knows is how it is to be brought to pass. The autocrats and the aristocrats and the democrats and the plutocrats have all failed; can the technocrats show us the way? They know what they want but can they tell us how to get it?

Well, perhaps they can. After all, crushed shrimp does sell better than pink doesn't it?

P.R.S.

FILMS

By MARK FORREST

Pier 13. Directed by Raoul Walsh. Capitol.

Yes, Mr. Brown. Directed by Jack Buchanan. Tivoli.

Grand Hotel. General Release.

OF the cinemas which comprise the group known as "The Big Five," the Capitol comes off, as a rule, worst in the quality of its pictures. "Pier 13," nevertheless, lifts this cinema out of its rut this week, and there should be nothing unlucky in the number. Mr. Walsh has thoroughly enjoyed himself and his direction of this comedy of low life with a dash of melodrama is a very smooth piece of work in which the character drawing and the atmosphere have been so cleverly built up that the actual plot does not much matter. So long as Spencer Tracy and Joan Bennett are being rude to one another or the drunk man in the dock "dive" is being affectionately quarrelsome to all and sundry, one does not care very much what becomes of Marion Burns, an attractive newcomer to the screen, who with George Walsh shoulders the melodrama, and fortunately the director has concentrated his energy upon the comedy rather than the tragedy.

This is the best performance that I have seen Joan Bennett give, and the whole cast is admirable.

I wish I could be so enthusiastic over the new British picture at the Tivoli, but "Yes, Mr. Brown," is a very sloppy film. I am one of those people who think that it is a great mistake for an actor to direct himself in the leading part—Mr. Chaplin is a law to himself—but this is what Mr. Buchanan has tried to do, with the result that the film goes along in fits and starts. Hardly any of the sequences are properly worked out; some are too short and the majority much too long. The latter fault is very obvious and a good fifteen minutes could be cut out of the picture without doing it any harm.

Mr. Buchanan is supported by Elsie Randolph, Margot Grahame, Vera Pearce and Hartley Power. There is plenty of talent here, but it is no good having a good team if they haven't got any implements with which to play, and the dialogue of "Yes, Mr. Brown" is as poor as that of "Pier 13" is good. There are one or two good tunes, notably the one which gives the film its title, and there is some clever dancing, though all of it will not be new to theatregoers. But these assets do not balance the liabilities.

"Grand Hotel" is generally released this week and every one will have an opportunity for stargazing. The constellation includes the two Barrymore brothers, Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford and Wallace Beery; unfortunately Mr. Goulding has forgotten that if it wasn't for the night the stars could not be seen at all.

The night in this case is the hotel itself and the clear dark sky upon which Miss Baum spent so much energy is nothing but an "inverted bowl" in the hands of the director.

CITY.—BY OUR CITY EDITOR.

Lombard Street, Thursday.

ONCE again the War Debts question has come into prominence to the exclusion of all minor factors in the financial situation, though this time in rather more pleasant fashion through Mr. Roosevelt's invitation to the British Government to send representatives early in March to discuss British debts to the U.S.A. and "methods of improving the world situation." Until something definite can be deduced from the somewhat vague terms of this welcome invitation, the hope is expressed that Britain will enter into no premature agreement with regard to a return to the gold standard, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has already laid down the conditions that the War Debts settlement must be final and must involve no resumption of Reparations.

Trustee Issues

City reports that the Bank of England had placed a new embargo on Trustee issues proved to be without foundation, but such issues are still under the control of the Bank, and when the gilt-edged market is depressed by the failure of two Corporation issues within a few days, owing to their price being equivalent to that of War Loan, a halt in the proceedings is in the nature of things. Meanwhile the rapidity with which the few industrial debenture and preference issues are oversubscribed shows what a volume of money is still awaiting investment at anything like a reasonable rate of interest. South African gold shares fluctuate pending an announcement of the Union's policy with regard to the mines, and the general tendency of markets otherwise has been remarkably steady considering the small amount of business passing.

"Cheap Money" Difficulties

The average figures for December of the chief items of the Clearing Banks' accounts were published before the actual accounts of all of the "Big Five" joint-stock banks made their appearance, and these average figures are remarkable for the rise shown in bank deposits. These averaged £1,983,000,000, being a rise of no less than £246,000,000 compared with December, 1931. It is little wonder that the banks have been somewhat embarrassed by this flood of money awaiting employment, and their investments have increased by £176,000,000 compared with December, 1931, the total for the ten Clearing Banks now being £472,000,000. The decline in advances to customers owing to slack trade has made it increasingly difficult to employ funds and has driven the banks into increasing their Treasury Bill holdings at practically unremunerative rates.

The Building Societies

The "cheap money" conditions which have embarrassed the banks have proved a mixed blessing to the Building Societies, the reduction in

interest rates making their 5 per cent. tax-free return tremendously attractive. As Mr. George Elkington stated at the meeting of the National Building Society, the fourth largest in England, their Society, like the others, was in danger of being swamped and overwhelmed by a huge increase of capital which it was impossible to utilise and drastic restrictions had to be put in force. Nevertheless, the National Building Society is now paying on all shares 4 per cent. tax-free or £5 6s. 8d. per cent. gross, and the Society has managed to maintain its sound position amid the changed conditions while enjoying a wonderfully good and successful year. Members' capital increased from £15,660,000 to £19,352,000 during the year, but the amount advanced during the year was over £4,250,000, and the expansion of the Building Society movement is exemplified by the fact that the National's total assets now amount to over £21,000,000, compared with only £2,428,000 eight years ago.

Investment Trusts

The reports of the investment trust companies are now making their appearance and these show, for the most part, some improvement in the position; for, while revenue has suffered further during the past year owing to the lower return on investments, the depreciation in securities of a year ago has to some extent been recovered. In the case of the older trusts, this is often found to be covered by reserves, while some are in the happy position of having investments of market value in excess of their balance-sheet valuation. It is hardly to be expected that the younger concerns can be so fortunate, owing to the lack of years in which to build up reserves. Yields on trust companies' stocks vary considerably according to the nature of the securities. In the case of debentures, the average return is around 4 per cent., but these stocks are rarely on offer and have to be picked up as opportunity presents. In the case of preference stocks and shares, a yield of about $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. can be obtained in the case of trusts whose revenue gives ample cover for its prior charges. The ordinary stocks give varying yields according to the trust's capital position and the extent of the investment depreciation, if any.

Lower Tobacco Dividend

The shares of the Imperial Tobacco Company eased slightly to 96s. 3d. on the announcement of a final dividend of $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and bonus of 5 per cent., making 20 per cent. tax free for the year, compared with $22\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for the previous year. The market had generally expected 20 per cent. for the year, but the reduction of the amount carried forward by about £200,000 and the cut in the dividend indicate that profits are over £1,000,000 down on the year, while there is also the underlying fear of "coupon" competition. The shares return about $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. tax free or $6\frac{3}{8}$ per cent. gross including the final dividend and bonus, a high yield nowadays for an industrial of the class of "Imps."

COMPANY MEETING

NATIONAL BUILDING SOCIETY

The eighty-third annual meeting of the National Building Society was held on January 20 at Southern House, Cannon street, London, E.C.

Mr. GEORGE ELKINGTON, J.P., F.R.I.B.A., the chairman, who presided, said:

The society has had a wonderful good and successful year, with satisfactory progress in every direction. The figures before you show that emphatically.

The subscriptions amounted to £6,288,857, and the withdrawals (including interest) to £2,645,288. The net increase in the members' capital was thus £3,688,089, or £3,600,472, including uncompleted interest added at the end of the year, and the total at Oct. 31 was £19,352,179. (Cheers.)

The ratio of withdrawals to members' capital was less even than that of last year, which was considered normal, showing at once the confidence of our members and their determination to keep their savings in the society whenever possible.

The advances during the year amounted to £4,256,564.

The total assets at the end of the year were £21,076,024, showing an increase over last year's total of £3,858,448, or nearly four millions—surely a very notable expansion in one year. (Hear, hear.) The gross revenue, another important indicator, was £1,211,868, this showing an increase over last year of £256,282—or over a quarter of a million.

But with all these evidences of prosperity and continuous expansion, the policy of the directors has been throughout one of consolidation and concentration. They have striven successfully to maintain and uphold a safe position, and to regulate even normal progress within due bounds.

The next important item is that of the reserve funds. The year's surplus, after providing for all expenses, income tax, and interest free of income tax on completed and uncompleted shares, amounts to £142,769. (Applause.)

Our principal reserve No. 1 has been increased to £600,000—an even amount, easy to recollect, which I hope every member will bear in mind as an evidence of safety first. Reserve No. 2 has also been increased, and now stands at £74,021.

We hope that reserve No. 1 will grow steadily year by year, and will never have to be touched, but reserve No. 2 is in a different category. It is being built up in all good years and in anticipation to meet possible losses in connection either with the Society's investments or its mortgages. It affords a proper and convenient way in which to deal with any such cases, and I want you all to get used to, and view with unconcern, any future variations in this item.

Mr. W. F. Foster, F.R.I.B.A., F.S.I. (deputy-chairman) seconded the resolution and it was carried unanimously.

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Managing Director: FREDERICK HYDE

Statement of Accounts, December 31st, 1932

LIABILITIES		£
Paid-up Capital	14,248,012	
Reserve Fund	11,500,000	
Current, Deposit and other Accounts (including Profit Balance)	420,997,244	
Acceptances and Confirmed Credits	10,669,817	
Engagements	4,942,908	
ASSETS		
Coin, Bank Notes and Balances with Bank of England	43,007,981	
Balances with, and Cheques on other Banks	14,348,542	
Money at Call and Short Notice	20,596,690	
Investments at or under Market Value	93,065,381	
Bills Discounted	36,508,644	
Advances to Customers and other Accounts	170,421,074	
Liabilities of Customers for Acceptances, Confirmed Credits and Engagements	15,612,728	
Bank Premises at Head Office and Branches	9,626,538	
Other Properties and work in progress for extension of the business	1,079,597	
Shares in Yorkshire Penny Bank Ltd.	750,000	
Capital, Reserve and Undivided Profits of		
Belfast Banking Co. Ltd.	1,574,886	
The Clydesdale Bank Ltd.	2,992,472	
North of Scotland Bank Ltd.	2,376,393	
Midland Bank Executor and Trustee Co. Ltd.	409,091	

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Next Week's Broadcasting

FEB. 4th, 8.0. p.m. (National) "Radio Music Hall," including Jack Payne with his Band, Alexander and Mose, Stainless Stephen, Anona Winn, Leonard Henry, the Western Brothers, Mr. Flotsam and Mr. Jetsam, Mabel Constanduros and Michael Hogan. The cast of Radio Music Hall is given in full because it is by way of being the B.B.C.'s unofficial retort to the uncompromising attitude recently adopted by the G.T.C.

As is now well known, Mr. George Black has placed a broadcasting ban on artists who are at the time under contract to the G.T.C., on the grounds that their participation in a studio broadcast keeps people at home and consequently empties his theatres. By what intricate process of reasoning Mr. Black has succeeded in persuading himself that well-known artists keep more people out of Music Halls by broadcasting with a G.T.C. contract in their pocket than when the same pockets do not contain this interesting document, nobody has thought it necessary to divulge.

"Radio Music Hall" is a neat riposte to this preposterous attitude, but to be effective, the standard must be maintained and the argument driven home. Such programmes as last week's "Modern (sic) Variety" serve no useful purpose, and can only help to aggravate a situation which is already intolerable, and one for which the B.B.C. is in no way responsible.

The Saturday Acrostics

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 19

SHAKESPEARIAN DAMSELS KNOWN TO VALIANT JACK,
ONE COMME IL FAUT, BUT ONE A NAUGHTY PACK.

1. In me the soldier's sword is wont to rest.
2. With this world's goods in ample measure blest.
3. For fee he'll arms assign you and a crest.
4. Pertaining to an aproned overseer.
5. Quite easy to be seen through, limpid, clear.
6. A fish that sounds like lady vending liquor.
7. Lop the last letter off an equine kicker.
8. Above the line you'll note me, not below.
9. That all is vanity he seeks to show.
10. I when the world was young grew old and died.
11. Tell me when knights the dragon-brood defied?
12. Old Edie Ochiltree remains the type.
13. Fleeting as smoke-clouds from tobacco-pipe.

SOLUTION OF ACROSTIC No. 18

T	a	t	t	O
R	o	l		L
A	s	h	a	m
V	e	g	e	t
f	E	l	d	s
L	a	m	b	s
H	E	r	c	u
b	R	i		B
S	a	u	t	e
J	e	r	b	O
O	w	n	e	R
Y	d	r	a	D

¹ Gen. ii. 25, iii. 7.

² Is. i. 3.

³ "And nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad."—
Fairly Queen, i.1.

The winner of Acrostic No. 17 (the first correct solution opened) was Mr. Greville E. Matheson, to whom a book has been sent.

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